

### **REMARKS**

Applicant would like to thank the Examiner for the careful consideration given the present application. The application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office action, and amended as necessary to more clearly and particularly describe the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

More particularly, by this Amendment "C" claim 2 has been amended and new claims 3-14 have been added to the application to round out applicants' claim coverage. Support for the amendments to claim 2 can be found on page 22, lines 24-25 of the specification. No claims have been canceled and no new matter has been added to the application. Claims 1-14 are presently pending in the application, with claim 1 having previously been withdrawn from consideration.

In the prior Office Action, the Examiner rejected claim 2 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Rubens, U.S. Pat. No. 3,616,172. Rubens teaches coating a shaped core material with a layer composed of a mixture of expandable resin particles and binder such as asphalt (see Abstract). The coated core material is then positioned within a hollow of a structure and heated, which causes the layer of expandable resin particles and binder to expand and fill any void space in the structure (see Abstract). Rubens also teaches that the mixture of expandable resin particles and binder can be used to fill a hollow structure in the absence of a shaped core material (see Abstract).

In Rubens, the mixture of expandable resin particles and binder (which is sometimes referred to as a "composite") is clearly not in the form of discrete, multiple granules as claimed in claim 2. On the contrary, Rubens teaches that the mixture of expandable resin particles and binder can exist in the form of a sheet that can be

wrapped around the shaped core material (see Fig. 1 and col. 2, lines 33-36).

Alternatively, Rubens teaches that the mixture of expandable resin particles and binder can exist in the form of a coating material, which can be applied to the shaped core by brushing or dipping (see col. 2, lines 29-33). Or, Rubens teaches that the mixture of expandable resin particles and binder can be applied using a doctor blade to a film, which is then applied to the shaped core (see col. 2, lines 35-40). Rubens never fairly teaches or suggests that the mixture of expandable resin particles and binder can be in the form of discrete, multiple granules, which are pre-packed into a bag or vessel before they are placed in the skeleton member, as presently claimed in claim 2.

In light of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in a condition for allowance and notice to that effect is hereby requested. If it is determined that the application is not in a condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to initiate a telephone interview with the undersigned attorney to expedite prosecution of the present application.

If there are any additional fees resulting from this communication, please charge same to our Deposit Account No. 18-0160, our Order No. SHM-16348.

Respectfully submitted,

RANKIN, HILL, PORTER & CLARK LLP

By: /Randolph E. Digges, III/  
Randolph E. Digges, III, Reg. No. 40590

4080 Erie Street  
Willoughby, Ohio 44094-7836  
(216) 566-9700